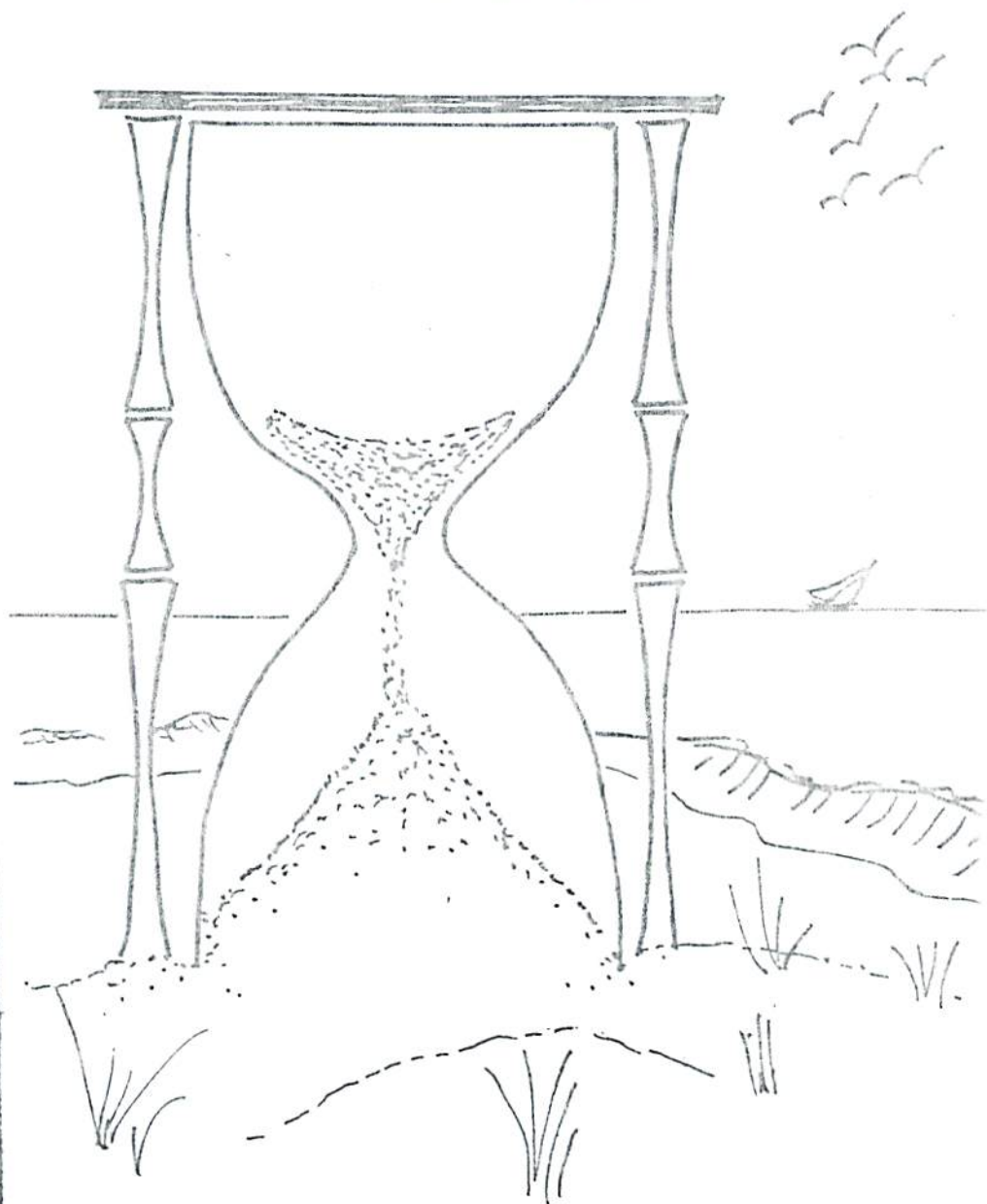


# DUXBURY BEACH.....



.....Where sand is running out



Before discussing the reasons why the Beach Committee feels an expenditure of public monies on the beach should be made, we would like to review the history of Duxbury Beach.

Following are excerpts from an article appearing in the Duxbury Clipper on May 8, 1969. The Committee strongly recommends this article for those citizens sincerely interested in the history and preservation of the beach. After reading this article, it is clear that the Duxbury Beach Trustees deserve the sincerest thanks from the townspeople for having the foresight to set aside this unique asset for the use and enjoyment of all.

#### THE HISTORY

For more than 30 years prior to 1919 Duxbury Beach was owned by members of the Wright family who owned the once splendid estate opposite the Public Library, now the site of the Eben H. Ellison Middle School. However fantastic the idea may seem in the light of present knowledge of the instability of the beach, they had serious plans, as shown by old time maps, for developing the full length of the beach in small house lots. Undeterred by the famous 1898 storm, they built three fairly sizable cottages, one at High Pines and two between High Pines and the bridge. In 1919 the executor of the Estate of Georgianna B. Wright offered the property for sale. With the plans for real estate development known and the even more serious danger that the beach might develop along Revere Beach or Coney Island lines, a meeting was held and some 18 to 20 loyal Duxbury sites raised enough money to buy the property. Title was taken on November 29, 1919, in the name of Duxbury Beach Association, a common law trust organized for the purpose of acquiring the beach and protecting it for the benefit of Duxbury.

Technically a "private enterprise," the Association pays town taxes, but no dividends have ever been paid on its shares, and its trustees serve without compensation.

In 1931, a committee was formed to consider a solution to the traffic problems of the bridge and beach. A review of the concerns of that committee reveals the striking similarity of the problems then to those we face today.

In the last 38 years the Beach Association has many times enlarged the parking areas and it maintains them at its own expense; its policy is to keep the northern parking space for the use of Duxbury people large enough to take care of all comers even on the few most popular holidays of the year.

Until 1941 the public parking space at the north end was so far from the Duxbury Bay side of the beach that public bathing was for all practical purposes limited to the outer beach. In 1941, therefore, to satisfy the demands of the public for bathing in the bay, the Association extended the road from the old northerly parking space to the cove of the beach and there built an entirely new parking space and the public bathhouse and lunchroom now known as the Pavillion. These improvements were financed in part by additional subscriptions from shareholders and in part from proceeds of sale for summer residence purposes of small parcels of land outside the park area at the extreme north end of the beach.

Every few years between 1930 and 1950, the question of State acquisition of Duxbury Beach was raised in one form or another, and often bills were introduced into the Legislature to accomplish this. For this period of more than 20 years, the threats were successfully defeated by Duxbury's able and watchful representatives in the Legislature with such assistance as they requested from the Selectmen and from the Duxbury Beach Association Trustees; but no special effort was required during this period by Duxbury residents in general.

In 1958, the Trustees became seriously concerned over misuse of the beach south of the bridge by the rougher element, together with the problem of jeeps in the dunes and speeding on the beach. An Article in the Warrant for the 1959 Town Meeting proposed the appropriation of \$800 for patrolling the beach, but this was not adopted at that time. In 1960, however, on the initiative of the Selectmen, several meetings and conferences were held between the Selectmen and the Trustees at which this problem was thoroughly discussed. For 1960, a new sign with new abbreviated rules was placed on the beach; and in 1961 the Association volunteered to make a four-wheel vehicle available for the Police Department and the Town Meeting appropriated \$4,500 for the purpose of establishing a police patrol for Duxbury Beach during the summer months.

The patrol was considered so successful in 1961 that substantially the same arrangements, with the vehicle provided by the Association and Town appropriation for policing, were continued in 1962 and 1963. Nevertheless, as use of the beach increased, problems of speeding, destruction of dunes, littering and the like persisted despite the patrol. Conferences were held between the Association Trustees, the Chief of Police and the Selectmen in December, 1963 and in April, 1964. In 1964 the Association gave the Town the beach



vehicle which was turned in by the Town for a new one, and at the March Town Meeting, the Selectmen were given specific authority to fix the resident sticker fee for use of the beach. Arrangements were worked out on a trial basis for closer control of the use of the beach by out-of-town vehicles. The Association acquired more barrels and made arrangements for frequent emptying of barrels, in an effort to reduce litter. Further steps for alleviating bad conditions on the beach were taken in subsequent years and are constantly under consideration and review by the Selectmen, by the Police Department and by the Beach Association Trustees at joint meetings held at least annually.

As evidence of its broad interest in all phases of conservation efforts, in 1968 the Beach Association made available to the Massachusetts Audubon Society a small area at High Pines for establishment of a sanctuary for migrating shore birds.

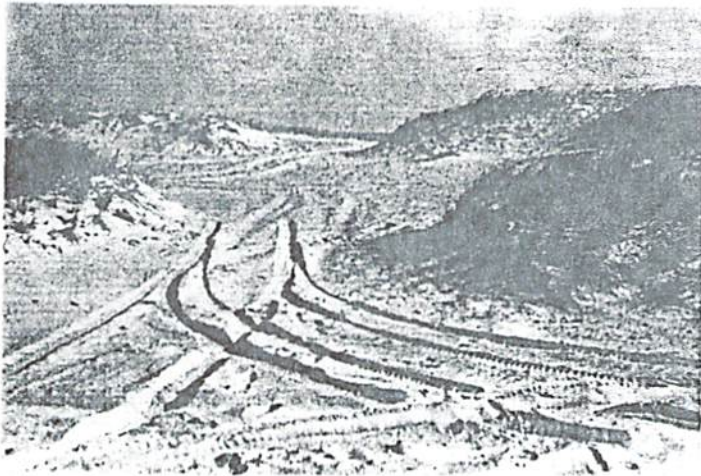
For more than 37 years, sometimes with honest differences of opinion, but more often, particularly in recent years, with complete harmony and mutual understanding, the Town of Duxbury and the Duxbury Beach Association have co-operated in beach problems, with the broad objectives of keeping the beach in its natural state and of giving Duxbury residents as much preferential use as seems practical in view of the ever-present threat of State taking. This co-operative effort has made possible results which could not have been achieved by either alone. For example, based on legal opinions of the Town Counsel and of counsel for the Association, if the Town owned the beach as a public park it could not differentiate between Duxbury residents and the public generally; as private owners, the Beach Association can and does. The Beach Association, on the other hand, could not afford to set up arrangements for issuing beach stickers to Duxbury residents and could not afford to pay for policing the parking spaces and the beach in general. These functions can best be provided by the Town; and, backed up by Town Meeting votes as required, it has loyally done so.

So far this history has stressed political and similar factors. On a long-range basis, the physical characteristics, geographical and ecological, may prove even more important.

## DUXBURY BEACH



ABUSED and



MISUSED

## RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY

Two Warrant Articles are being presented by the Duxbury Beach Study Committee. They are the result of many meetings and hours of study of the problem of the protection of the beach from erosion due to storms and high winds. The more recent phenomenon of increasing human over-use further aggravates the natural problem.

This has been happening to a serious degree here in Duxbury. Many of the protective dunes are being washed or blown away and the gaps between the dunes are being washed even deeper during major storms. In fact, if this is allowed to continue, we will have a series of islands bounded by inlets from the ocean instead of a continuous, usable beach.

Coastal engineers have known for years that sand dunes are among nature's most effective barriers against the action of waves, tides, and winds.

In its report to the Selectmen, the Beach Committee recommends that immediate dune restoration efforts be focused on the Beach. Bulldozing available sand into the most seriously eroded "blow-outs" should be done without delay. Extensive snowfence construction is needed to trap and help hold shifting sand. Transplanting and fertilizing beachgrass is necessary to permanently stabilize the sand and initiate the process of naturally restoring and maintaining the dunes of the Beach.

The Beach Committee believes that to start with certain changes in the rules for use of the beach should be made and enforced. These should include protecting the grasses and fencing on the existing dunes by preventing travel over these areas by foot or vehicle.

Further, the committee concluded that additional money will be required to supplement the funds of the Beach Trustees, in order to accelerate the work of dune rebuilding and the protection of the dunes that remain. The Duxbury Beach Association has made an effort to begin the preservation and re-building of the dunes, and most of its income from the pavillion and parking fees has been spent on the maintenance and improvement of the beach, including the parking lots. Many volunteer helpers have added to the protective effort. However, at this time, further measures are imperative if the beach is to be preserved.



The beach committee recommends that a Beach Conservation Officer be hired by the Town of Duxbury to enforce the beach rules and to supervise the necessary re-building. It also recommends that the Town rent the beach until June 1974 for the sum of \$15,000.00, thus doubling the funds which the Duxbury Beach Association can expend for the improvement and restoration of the beach. Expenditure of these funds will be by approval of the Selectmen and the Beach Trustees or their designates.

The question is - "Is Duxbury Beach worth saving?" The Beach Committee emphatically agrees it is and asks the Town to give affirmative consideration to Articles 49 and 50 at Town Meeting.